

Solid Waste Advisory Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
May 12, 2016

Present: Jane Knox, Rita Braswell, Rita Kornblum, Pene Williams (visitor), Virginia Walton (staff)

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm by Chairperson Knox.

The April 14, 2016 minutes were accepted on a motion by Kornblum/Braswell.

For next year's Rid Litter Day, members suggested getting reusable lawn signs with a blank space to fill in the date. Special bags, of a different color, would also be useful for participants so that it is easy to identify bags of litter at the transfer station and for collection service.

Walton reported the findings of the Community Center trash audit to the Community Center staff with a recommendation to capture more recyclables, donate leftover personal care products and compost food scraps. Additional recycle containers and stickers were given to them. A "free" table for left behind shampoos, soap, etc. may be considered to help reduce waste. The committee suggested auditing the library next.

Walton gave out compost collection containers and compostable bags made and donated by Novamont. Members were asked to test whether the bags compost in their backyard compost pile and provide feedback. Walton reported that all the compost bins have been sold. Eighteen people attended the backyard composting workshop, 14 attended the organic lawn workshop and 5 were signed up for the upcoming Saturday, May 14 rain garden workshop. Walton would like to offer the series again in 2017 but earlier in the year.

Members reviewed the DEEP grant funds that are left to expend. Walton has ordered the commercial dishwasher for the Town Hall, which will be arriving soon, and a movie, "Just Eat It", that will be available for town programs and loan at the library. The committee agreed to use the rest of the grant funds to produce a fall PTO-sponsored school program about healthy eating for families on the go that incorporates the food waste challenge strategies and a best practices business mailing. Even though the grant ends December 31, 2016, expenditures after June 30, 2016 may not be reimbursed.

Kornblum shared the Neighbors May-June newspaper article that she submitted about the Repair Café. The next newspaper deadline is mid-June. Walton will draft an article on the Town's zero waste efforts. Kornblum will share with members the facebook page that she has used to post upcoming programs and events. Walton reported that the transfer station supervisor would like to put up a large information board near the entrance shed for announcements and education on what is and is not recyclable. Walton did a presentation entitled "Recycling 101" as part of the library's workshops. She thought this might be something that the Senior Center would be interested in hosting. Kornblum will talk about the June 4 paper shredding event and the school waste challenge on the next ECSU radio interview. It was suggested to include in the trash bill inserts that finished leaf compost is available at the transfer station.

Kornblum stated that she is gathering zero waste event guidelines from other communities to help her and Walton develop draft guidelines for the Town. Once drafted, they will invite the school food service manager, an Eastern Highlands Health District sanitarian, someone from the Downtown Partnership and Parks and Recreation and a food service business to help transform the draft into a working policy.

The committee reviewed the summer event schedule for the downtown. There was discussion about whether the committee wanted to provide a low waste set-up at each of these. It was decided to use the new waste station canopies and banners for the first concert on June 2, 2016, then evaluate the set-up, monitoring and breakdown to see if it is something that could be easily continued through the season. Braswell, Kornblum and Knox volunteered to help on June 2, 2016.

Williams expressed concerns about the proliferation of plastic bags and its impacts on the environment. The committee decided to revisit strategies to reduce plastic bag use. Knox will review the notes she took several years ago when the Westport, CT plastic bag ban first went into effect. Williams will research Northampton's plastic bag ban and the strategies they used to gain support from the community.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2016. The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Walton

DRAFT